

WASHINGTON, DC – Today the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) announced that it would be releasing \$250,000 (five \$50,000 grants) to Oregon and the four other Pacific Coast states seeing a substantial increase in marine debris because of the tsunami that struck Japan in 2011. Upon hearing the news, Senator Ron Wyden, Senator Jeff Merkley, Congressman Peter DeFazio, Congressman Earl Blumenauer, Congressman Kurt Schrader, and Congresswoman Suzanne Bonamici made the following joint statement:

“NOAA’s release of these funds is great for Oregon and the Pacific Coast, indicative of the type of federal, state and local partnership that is necessary to cope with what is washing up along the coast on a daily basis. The debris poses a navigational hazard to our boaters and fishermen, an environmental hazard to the marine ecosystems, and a threat to the economy of our seaside towns that depend on their pristine beaches to attract tourists and businesses. So far, response and removal has proven to be challenging and costly. We have been working with federal agencies to identify ways to improve response and assist states with the cost of removal. This money is a step in the right direction and a positive sign that NOAA is responding to the tsunami debris issue promptly with concrete action. We look forward to working with NOAA and other stakeholders on these challenges going forward.”